

IN THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 2-5 and 7. These sheets, which include Figs. 2-5 and 7, replace the original sheets including Figs. 2-5 and 7.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets (5)

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5, 7 and 9-17 are presently pending in this application, Claims 4, 6 and 8 having been canceled, Claims 1-3, 5 and 7 having been amended and Claims 9-17 having been newly added by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, the drawings were objected to because of informalities; Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ishihara et al. (U.S. Patent 6,764,527); Claims 1 and 5-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Otsubo et al. (U.S. Patent 7,090,714); Claims 2, 3, 5 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ohashi et al. (U.S. Patent 5,514,347); Claims 2-6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Otsubo et al. in view of Ohashi et al. or Usui et al. (U.S. Patent 5,026,611); Claims 1 and 5-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 08-012460 (hereinafter “JP ‘460”) in view of Otsubo et al.; and Claims 2, 5, 6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP ‘460 in view of Ohashi et al. or Usui et al.

In response to the objection to the drawings, submitted herewith is a separate LETTER SUBMITTING REPLACEMENT DRAWING SHEET(S), submitting for approval changes to Figures 2-5 and 7. Specifically, Figures 2, 3 and 7 have been amended to change the view numbers to be oriented in the same direction as the views, and Figures 4 and 5 have been amended to designate a legend “Prior Art” as required by the Examiner.

Claims 1-3, 5 and 7 have been amended and Claims 9-17 have been added herein. These amendments and additions in the claims are believed to find support in the specification, claims and drawings as originally filed, and no new matter is believed to be added thereby. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the

undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive mutually satisfactory claim language.

Before addressing the rejections based on the cited references, a brief review of Claim 1 as currently amended is believed to be helpful. Claim 1 is directed to a pillar-shaped honeycomb structural body and recites: “a structure comprising a plurality of lamination members, the plurality of lamination members having a plurality of holes and including a plurality of metal lamination member comprising a material mainly made of metal, the structure having a plurality of through holes extending in parallel with one another in a length direction of the structure and a partition wall portion interposed between the through holes, wherein the lamination members are laminated in the length direction so that the holes of the lamination members are superposed on one another, and the through holes includes ones sealed at a first end of the structure and ones sealed at a second end of the structure such that the structure is configured to filter particles in an exhaust gas.”

It is respectfully submitted that Ishihara et al., Otsubo et al., Ohashi et al., Usui et al. and JP ‘460 do not teach or suggest “*a structure comprising a plurality of lamination members, the plurality of lamination members having a plurality of holes and including a plurality of metal lamination member comprising a material mainly made of metal, the structure having a plurality of through holes extending in parallel with one another in a length direction of the structure and a partition wall portion interposed between the through holes, wherein the lamination members are laminated in the length direction so that the holes of the lamination members are superposed on one another, and the through holes includes ones sealed at a first end of the structure and ones sealed at a second end of the structure such that the structure is configured to filter particles in an exhaust gas*” as recited in amended Claim 1 (emphasis added in italic). Ishihara et al. states that “[t]he plugs constituted by the sub-honeycomb structure are *partial plugs which do not fully close the cells of the main*

honeycomb structure but only partially close them”¹ (emphasis added in italic). Otsubo et al. shows that “[i]n the ceramic honeycomb filter of the first invention, as shown in FIGS. 1(a) and 1(b), for instance, the honeycomb structures 11 and 12 are bonded to each other in the flow path direction, *at least one plug 18a on an exhaust gas inlet side being disposed at a position inside the filter separate from an inlet end surface of the filter*, and plugs on the inlet side being formed at desired positions of end portions of at least one honeycomb structure”² (emphasis added in italic). It is believed that Ohashi et al., Usui et al. and JP ‘460 do not show or describe that the through holes of their apparatus are plugged at one of their ends. Therefore, the structure recited in amended Claim 1 is clearly distinguishable from Ishihara et al., Otsubo et al., Ohashi et al., Usui et al. and JP ‘460.

Because none of Ishihara et al., Otsubo et al., Ohashi et al., Usui et al. and JP ‘460 discloses the structure as recited in Claim 1, their teachings even in combination are not believed to render the honeycomb structural body recited in Claim 1 obvious.

Likewise, Claim 7 recites “a structure comprising a plurality of lamination members, the plurality of lamination members having a plurality of holes and including a plurality of metal lamination members comprising a material mainly made of metal, the structure having a plurality of through holes extending in parallel with one another in a length direction of the structure and a partition wall portion interposed between the through holes, wherein the plurality of lamination members includes ones having different shapes or sizes of the holes, the lamination members are laminated in the length direction so that the holes of the lamination members are superposed on one another and a surface of the partition wall portion has an irregularity, and the through holes includes ones sealed at a first end of the structure and ones sealed at a second end of the structure such that the structure is configured to filter

¹ Ishihara et al., column 2, lines 47-49.

² Otsubo et al., column 5, lines 33-40.

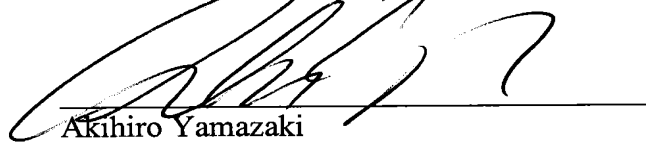
particles in an exhaust gas” and is believed to be also distinguishable from Ishihara et al.,
Otsubo et al., Ohashi et al., Usui et al. and JP ‘460.

For the foregoing reasons, Claims 1 and 7 are believed to be allowable. Furthermore, since Claims 2, 3, 5 and 9-17 depend directly from either Claim 1 or 7, substantially the same arguments set forth above also apply to these dependent claims. Hence, Claims 2, 3, 5 and 9-17 are believed to be allowable as well.

In view of the amendments and discussions presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early action favorable to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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